

Precedence Within the Catholic Church

*The international tables of
precedence were set forth in
1815 at the Congress of Vienna,
and they remain in force today.*

The Pope

Sacred College of
Cardinals

Episcopal Cardinals
Dean
Subdean
Latin Rite members
Eastern Rite Patriarchs
Presbyteral Cardinals
Diaconal Cardinals

Patriarchs

Archbishops

Primates
Major Archbishops
Residential Archbishops
Titular Archbishops

Bishops

Residential Bishops
Titular Bishops

Lesser Prelates

Prelates Nullius
Abbots Nullius
Abbots
Exarchs Apostolic

Vicars Apostolic
Prefects Apostolic
Apostolic Administrators
Prelates of Personal

Prelatures
Monsignors

Protonotaries Apostolic
De Numero
Supranumerary

Superiors / Provosts
Canons

Monsignors

Prelates of Honor of His
Holiness
Chaplains of His Holiness

Vicars

Vicars General
Episcopal Vicars
Vicars Forane

Diocesan Notaries

Archpriests

Priests

Deacons

NOTES:

1. Within each category or rank, precedence is derived from the date of ordination, promotion, or nomination into that specific category.

2. The Sacred College of Cardinals is divided into three orders: the episcopal, presbyteral, and diaconal; but all cardinals are bishops except a few non-bishops raised to the Cardinalate who request not to be elevated upon their reception into the Sacred College. The presbyteral cardinals are those metropolitan archbishops who have been elevated to the Sacred College.

3. The episcopal cardinals consist of the six titular bishops of the suburbicarian sees, plus all Eastern rite patriarchs who

have been elevated to the Sacred College. The six Latin Rite members elect from among their number the Dean (who gets the seventh suburbicarian see, Ostia, plus the one he previously held) and Subdean of the College.

4. Patriarchs of the Latin and Eastern rites make up a college together, immediately following the College of Cardinals in precedence. However, it is general practice to give even those Eastern rite patriarchs who are not cardinals a place of honor after the episcopal cardinals and before the presbyteral cardinals.

5. The Pope's delegate within a nation -- the pro-nuncio, nuncio, inter-nuncio, or apostolic delegate -- are usually titular archbishops, and they take this order of precedence in the Church. However, these men are given a diplomatic precedence over the other clerics of the country, as he is the representative of the Pope.